

WORKFORCE OBSERVATIONS FOR NORTHWEST WISCONSIN COUNTIES

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State of Wisconsin
Department of Workforce Development

Unemployment Rates Drop in Northwest Wisconsin

The number of workers in the ten-county region increased in July according to estimates released by the Department of Workforce Development. The increase in the number of workers in Northwest Wisconsin, while welcome news, was shy of seasonal increases in the last two summers. Nevertheless, the increase in jobs did help reduce the number of unemployed and the unemployment rate.

The July unemployment rate of 5.3 percent for the northwest region is down from 5.9 percent in June but slightly higher than the 5.2 percent unemployed of last July.

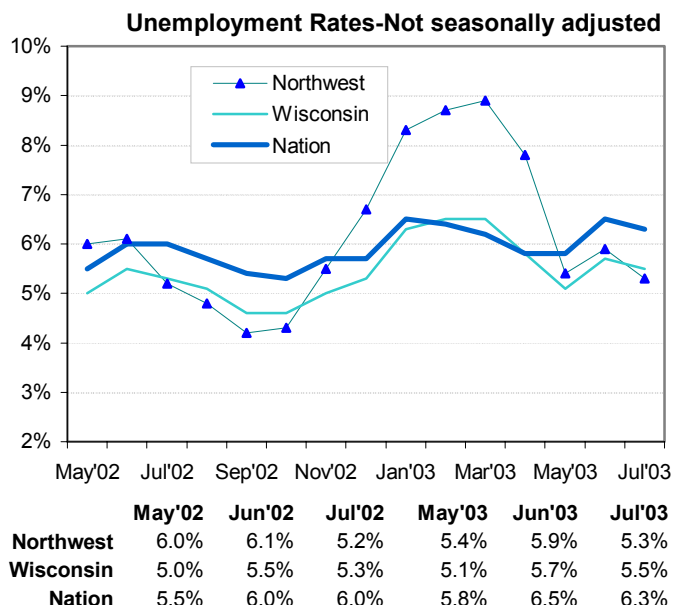
Out of a total labor force of 98,900 in July, nearly 93,700 were working and 5,200 were unemployed. The number of employed increased by nearly 400 during the month but that did not compensate for the reduction in the number of unemployed that totaled nearly 700. With a weak job market it is likely that unsuccessful job seekers simply stopped looking for work in July and were no longer included in the estimates.

The current unemployment rate in the northwest remains lower than both the state not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in July of 5.5 percent and the national rate of 6.3 percent. Seasonally adjusted the state unemployment rate in July was 5.6 percent and the nation rate was 6.2 percent.

The current unemployment rate for Northwest Wisconsin is the highest July rate the region has experienced since 1994. Then the area was still recovering from a recession that officially ended March 1991, over three years earlier. The unemployment rate is a trailing indicator of a recession because many employ-

ers do not immediately rehire workers as the economy begins to improve. First they increase the number of weekly hours for their existing employees. This trend is appearing in some parts of Wisconsin, like the Eau Claire metro area, but it is not occurring throughout the state. Statewide the number of hours worked in manufacturing dropped from 40.7 in June to 39.5 July. (Average weekly hours are only collected in metropolitan areas and not for the counties in Northwest Wisconsin.)

Manufacturing employment in the ten-county region declined once more in July. Due to hiring that did occur in April and May, however, the gap from last year



Civilian Labor Force Estimates for Northwest Wisconsin counties: Current month - July 2003

	Ashland			Bayfield			Burnett			Douglas			Iron		
	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02
Civilian labor force	9,441	9,372	9,012	8,366	8,291	7,999	8,353	8,431	8,190	23,715	23,654	23,366	3,472	3,455	3,381
Employed	8,705	8,582	8,327	7,959	7,846	7,613	8,037	8,059	7,827	22,405	22,287	22,142	3,225	3,175	3,147
Unemployed	736	790	685	407	445	386	316	372	363	1,310	1,367	1,224	247	280	234
% unemployed	7.8	8.4	7.6	4.9	5.4	4.8	3.8	4.4	4.4	5.5	5.8	5.2	7.1	8.1	6.9

	Price			Rusk			Sawyer			Taylor			Washburn		
	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02
Civilian labor force	7,465	7,636	7,070	7,154	7,209	7,092	11,261	11,182	11,283	11,241	11,311	10,725	8,431	8,636	8,131
Employed	7,100	7,195	6,701	6,765	6,745	6,685	10,792	10,601	10,783	10,729	10,678	10,309	7,947	8,110	7,709
Unemployed	365	441	369	389	464	407	469	581	500	512	633	416	484	526	422
% unemployed	4.9	5.8	5.2	5.4	6.4	5.7	4.2	5.2	4.4	4.6	5.6	3.9	5.7	6.1	5.2

* not seasonally adjusted

Industry Employment Estimates for Northwest Wisconsin: Current month - July 2003

(Employment in thousands)	Ashland			Bayfield			Burnett			Douglas			Iron		
	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02
Total Nonfarm	9.3	9.4	9.2	4.6	4.6	4.5	5.3	5.4	5.3	18.1	18.7	17.7	2.3	2.3	2.3
Const/Min'g/Nat. Resources	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.3	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.3	0.3	0.3
Manufacturing	1.2	1.2	1.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.9	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.1	1.2	0.4	0.4	0.4
Trade	1.1	1.1	1.1	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.7	3.2	3.2	3.2	0.3	0.4	0.4
Transportation & Utilities	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	2.2	2.2	2.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Financial Activities	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.1	0.1	0.1
Education & Health Services	1.9	1.9	1.8	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.6	0.7	0.6	1.7	1.7	1.7	0.3	0.3	0.3
Leisure & Hospitality	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.5	1.4	1.3	0.7	0.7	0.7	2.5	2.5	2.2	0.4	0.3	0.4
Info, Prof/Bus.Srv, Othr Srv.	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.3	3.4	3.4	2.9	0.1	0.1	0.1
Total Government	2.1	2.3	2.0	1.3	1.4	1.2	1.4	1.5	1.4	2.4	3.1	2.7	0.3	0.4	0.4

	Price			Rusk			Sawyer			Taylor			Washburn		
	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02	Jul '03	Jun '03	Jul '02
Total Nonfarm	6.8	7.0	6.5	5.9	6.0	5.9	7.5	7.5	7.7	9.3	9.4	9.0	6.1	6.4	6.1
Const/Min'g/Nat. Resources	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3
Manufacturing	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.1	2.1	2.2	0.6	0.6	0.6	2.8	2.8	2.9	1.1	1.1	1.1
Trade	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.6	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.0	1.0	1.0
Transportation & Utilities	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.2
Financial Activities	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2
Education & Health Services	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.7	0.7	0.7	1.1	1.2	1.1	0.8	0.8	0.8
Leisure & Hospitality	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.3	1.5	1.4	1.4	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.9	0.8	0.8
Info, Prof/Bus.Srv, Othr Srv.	0.7	0.7	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.8	1.2	1.2	1.0	0.4	0.4	0.4
Total Government	0.9	1.1	0.9	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.9	2.0	2.0	0.9	1.1	0.9	1.2	1.5	1.2

Current month preliminary. Estimates based on March 2002 benchmark. Summing from unrounded numbers.

Employers with multiple sites can improve the information on local labor force and employment conditions (used in the above table) in their counties by providing employment and wages for each of their Wisconsin locations on the Multiple Worksite Report (MWR). The voluntary report correctly identifies the employment and wages of *where people work* instead of the data being aggregated in one industry or one location. For example, XYZ Company has physical locations in three counties but completes its tax accounting report in only one county. That means all employees and their wages are allocated to that single county inflating the actual employment picture there and deflating the picture in the other two counties. The MWR distributes that employment to all three counties and helps to improve local indicators used by planners, businesses, developers, and analysts.

Contact Deborah Holt, program manager, at 608-266-5321 for more information.

has narrowed to under 100 fewer production jobs. In July there were over 13,000 jobs in manufacturing. Because of the transition to the new industry classification system it is impossible to make comparisons to any other years but even under the old system production jobs were down from the high-water mark in 2000.

The number of nonfarm jobs declined by 1,300 in July to a total 75,300 in the ten-county region. Nearly all of the lost jobs were from government units although there were 30 fewer jobs in manufacturing and 40 fewer in transportation and utilities.

There were 1,850 fewer government jobs in July and government employment is down 400 from one year ago. The loss in the last month is still primarily due to school recess. Since most schools operate on a delayed payroll it takes longer for the loss of work

in June to appear in the estimates. There are also fewer government jobs compared with last July and this could be the first indicator that state and local units are reducing staff, or not hiring as many summer workers, due to budget issues.

Overall, there are nearly 1,000 more jobs in the region compared with one year ago. Most of those jobs are with leisure and hospitality establishments. There were over 10,000 jobs in this industry in July. Leisure and hospitality is a new industry classification that includes restaurants, resorts and motels.

In the next few months the area can expect to see further reduction in the unemployment rate as workers are recalled to local schools, assemblers are hired in temporary wreath production, construction projects continue, and students return to school.

Look for the most current Labor Market Information at: WWW.DWD.STATE.WI.US/LMI

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